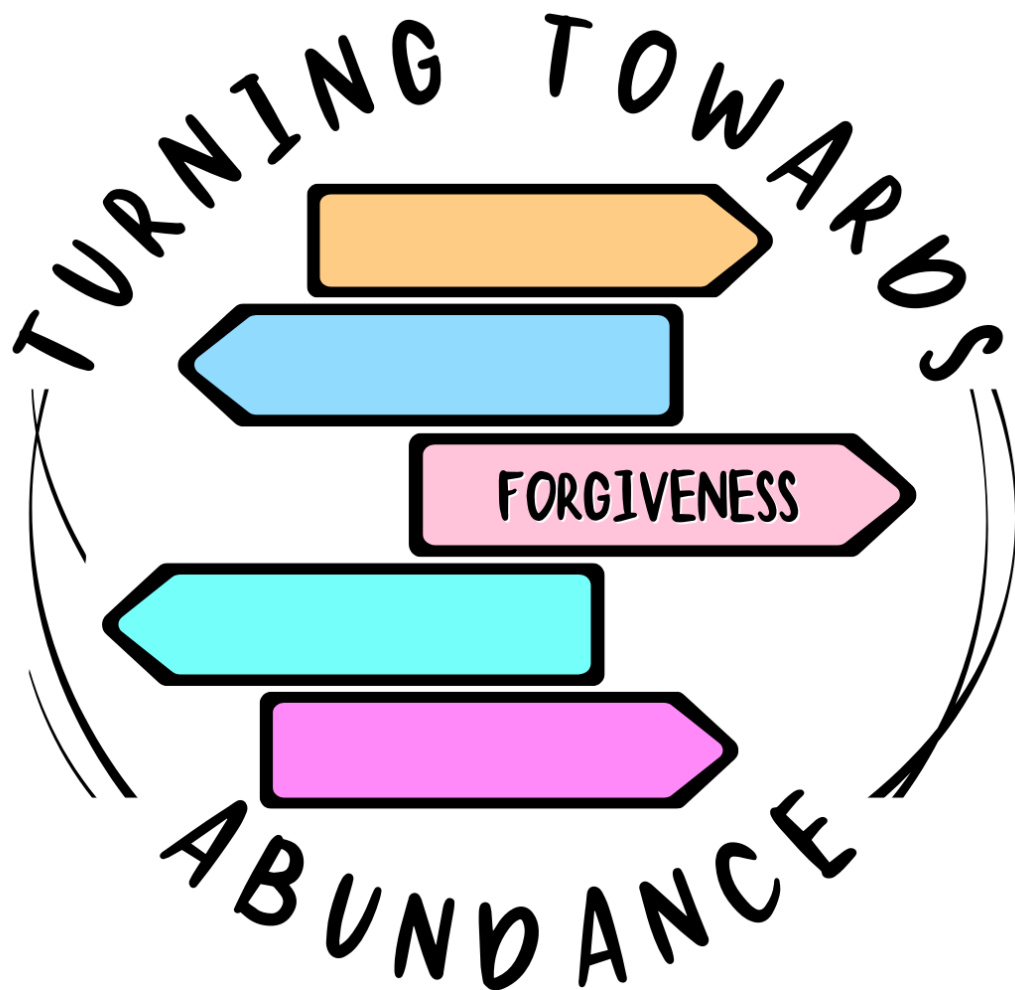


Following Jesus' teachings, Grace seeks to educate, lead, and partner with all people through discipleship to worship, service, and faith celebration.

Lenten Worship

March 15, 2023 7:00pm
Grace Lutheran Church † Davenport, Iowa
Pastor Stephanie Wood



] There are times where all we can see is scarcity. How little we have in faith, love, or our own financial security. Throughout this season of Lent, we invite you to turn toward God's abundance. Each week we will prayerfully reflect on God's abundant faith, mercy, forgiveness, love, and generosity. During worship we won't have a sermon, instead we will hear poems, scripture, and reflect on God's abundance through different means of prayer.

Congregational Response in Bold.

Prelude

Announcements

Greeting

P: The love of God poured into our hearts, the saving grace of Jesus Christ, and the abundant life of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

C: **And also with you.**

Opening Prayer

P: O God, rich in mercy, full of kindness, out of your great love, you raise us up from sin and death and make us alive together with Christ. Write your word upon our hearts and restore in us the image of your love that, by your Spirit, our way of life may become the way of Christ, through whom we pray.

C: **Amen.**

Hymn

Joyous Light of Heavenly Glory ELW 561

Poem

From Whom No Secrets Are Hid by Walter Brueggemann

The priest says, "Almighty God...from whom no secrets are hid."

We rush to the next phrase but now linger there.

We are rich conundrums of secrets,

we weave a pattern of lies in order to be
well thought of,

we engage in subterfuge about our truth.

We carry old secrets too painful to utter,

too shameful to acknowledge,

too burdensome to bear,
of failures we cannot undo,
of alienations we regret but cannot fix,
of grandiose exhibits we cannot curb.
And you know them.
You know them all.
And so, we take a deep sigh in your presence,
no longer needing to pretend and
cover up and
deny.

We mostly do not have big sins to confess,
only modest shames that do not
fit our hoped-for selves.

And then we find that *your knowing* is more
powerful than *our secrets*.
You know and do not turn away,
and our secrets that seemed too powerful
are emptied of strength,
secrets that seemed to burdensome
are now less severe.

We marvel that when you find us out
you stay with us,
taking us seriously,
taking our secrets soberly,
but not ultimately,
overpowering our little failure
with your massive love
and abiding patience.

We long to be fully, honestly
exposed to your gaze of gentleness.
In the moment of your knowing
we are eased and lightened,
and we feel the surge of joy move in our bodies,
because we are not *ours* in cringing
but *yours* in communion.

We are yours and find the truth before you
makes us free for
wonder, love, and praise -- and new life.

Hymn

Amazing Grace ELW 779

Gospel Reading: Luke 15:1-3. 11b-32

P: The Gospel according to Luke.

C: **Glory to you, O Lord.**

Now all the tax collectors and sinners were coming near to listen to him. And the Pharisees and the scribes were grumbling and saying, "This fellow welcomes sinners and eats with them."

So, he told them this parable: Which one of you, having a hundred sheep and losing one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness and go after the one that is lost until he finds it? When he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders and rejoices. And when he comes home, he calls together his friends and neighbors, saying to them, 'Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep that was lost.' Just so, I tell you, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance.

Or what woman having ten silver coins, if she loses one of them, does not light a lamp, sweep the house, and search carefully until she finds it? When she has found it, she calls together her friends and neighbors, saying, 'Rejoice with me, for I have found the coin that I had lost.' Just so, I tell you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents."

Then Jesus said, "There was a man who had two sons. The younger of them said to his father, 'Father, give me the share of the property that will belong to me.' So, he divided his property between them. A few days later the younger son gathered all he had and traveled to a distant country, and there he squandered his property in dissolute living. When he had spent everything, a severe famine took place throughout that country, and he began to be in need. So, he went and hired himself out to one of the citizens of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed the pigs. He would gladly have filled himself with the pods that the pigs were eating; and no one gave him anything. But when he came to himself, he said, 'How many of my father's hired hands have bread enough and to spare, but here I am dying of hunger! I will get up and go to my father, and I will say to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son; treat me like one of your

hired hands." ' So, he set off and went to his father. But while he was still far off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion; he ran and put his arms around him and kissed him. Then the son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son.' But the father said to his slaves, 'Quickly, bring out a robe – the best one – and put it on him; put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. And get the fatted calf and kill it and let us eat and celebrate; for this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found!' And they began to celebrate.

Now his elder son was in the field; and when he came and approached the house, he heard music and dancing. He called one of the slaves and asked what was going on. He replied, 'Your brother has come, and your father has killed the fatted calf, because he has got him back safe and sound.' Then he became angry and refused to go in. His father came out and began to plead with him. But he answered his father, 'Listen! For all these years I have been working like a slave for you, and I have never disobeyed your command; yet you have never given me even a young goat so that I might celebrate with my friends. But when this son of yours came back, who has devoured your property with prostitutes, you killed the fatted calf for him!' Then the father said to him, 'Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours. But we had to celebrate and rejoice, because this brother of yours was dead and has come to life; he was lost and has been found.'"

P: The Gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise to you, O Christ.

Active Prayer

P: In Christ Jesus we meet the God who knows our weakness and bears the wounds of the world. Therefore, let us be bold as we pray, trusting that God draws near to those in any kind of need.

C: Amen

Following the reading of the "Prayer Before the Prayer" by Desmond Tutu and Mpho Tutu: Take a moment for reflection. Hold on to the stone in your hand and consider your forgiveness and offer a prayer to show forgiveness towards someone else. Then you may come forward and place the stone in the basket up front.

I want to be willing to let go, to forgive.
But dare not ask for the will to forgive,
in case you give it to me
And I am not yet ready.
I am not yet ready for my heart to soften.
I am not yet ready to be vulnerable again.
Not yet ready to see that there is humanity in my tormentor's eyes
Or that the one who hurt me may also have cried
I am not yet ready for the journey.
I am not yet interested in the path
I am at the prayer before the prayer of forgiveness
Grant me the will to want to forgive.
Grant it to me not yet but soon
Can I even form the words?
Forgive me? Dare I even look?
Do I dare to see the hurt I have caused:
I can glimpse all the shattered pieces of that fragile thing
That soul trying to rise on the broken wings of hope
But only out of the corner of my eye.
I am afraid of it.
And if I am afraid to see
How can I not be afraid to say: Forgive me?
Is there a place where we can meet?
You and me
The place in the middle where we straddle the lines
Where you are right and I am right too.
And both of us are wrong and wronged
Can we meet there?
And look for the place where the path begins
The path that ends when we forgive.

Concluding Prayer

P: God of all compassion, gather our prayers in your mercy and grant to us what you know we need, that we may walk in the life and the peace of your Spirit, through Jesus Christ, our hope and our salvation.

C: **Amen.**

Lord's Prayer

P: Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray.

C: Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.

Hymn

Go, My Children, with My Blessing..... ELW 543

Blessing

P: Christ Jesus dwell in our hearts through faith, as we are being rooted and grounded in love, strengthened by the Spirit, and filled with all the fullness of God.

C: Amen.

Interested in Joining Grace?

Please contact the church office office@gracewelcomesyou.org, for information about joining Grace Lutheran Church. All are welcome and we would be overjoyed to have you engaged in the worship, ministries, and congregational life at Grace.

Worship Boxes

Worship Boxes are available in the Narthex for families with children attending worship. The boxes contain interactive materials that encourage children to participate in worship. Please use and return to the table as you leave worship.

Sparkhouse Magazines

Children's Sparkhouse Magazines are available in the Narthex. We encourage children and families to take home a copy and enjoy the pictures and stories about ways we live as children of God. We currently deliver these to our LIFT families. If you have grandchildren or friends of your family that would enjoy a copy of this magazine, please feel free to pick one up.

Do You Receive the Weekly Update?

Every Thursday we email out the Weekly Update with current announcements, links, birthdays, anniversaries, Synod/ELCA updates, and more. If you would like to be added to our email list, please contact Annie in the church office.

Lenten Outreach Collections

Lutheran Services in Iowa (LSI)

LSI's goal is to build happy, healthy families. They empower children and parents through education, mental and behavioral healthcare, in-home support and training, and innovative collaborations with community partners. For more information about LSI go to lsiowa.org. **We are collecting the following items for LSI: Donations to benefit their Early Childhood families and new moms - diapers, wipes, deodorant, pad, tampons, baby bathing items, breast milk bags, Dreft laundry soap, diaper ointments, toiletries.** Donations may be brought anytime during Lent.

Serving in Worship

Greeter..... Deb Kirby
Usher..... Mike Kirby
Sound System..... Russ Finkler
Altar Guild..... Mike Keller
Tech Assistant..... Andrew Savely

Grace Musicians

Heart & Voice Choir Director..... Sally Meier
Organist..... Susan Senn
Pianist..... Kathi Parrish



Grace Lutheran Church
1140 East High Street
Davenport, IA 52803
563-322-0769

gracewelcomesyou.org
office@gracewelcomesyou.org

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